



## Pacific Pests, Pathogens & Weeds - Mini Fact Sheet Edition

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### Giant sensitive plant (450)

Relates to: **Weeds**



Photo 1. Thicket of giant sensitive plant, *Mimosa diplotricha*.



Photo 2. Individual plant, giant sensitive plant, *Mimosa diplotricha*, showing stem, leaves and flowers.



Photo 3. Backward-pointing thorns, giant sensitive plant, *Mimosa diplotricha*.



Photo 4. Leaves of giant sensitive plant, *Mimosa diplotricha*. Note, leaflets of the central leaf have collapsed.



Photo 5. Flowerhead of giant sensitive plant, *Mimosa diplotricha*. Note, the fruits, left and beneath the stem, and the backward, curved thorns on the stem and leaf stalk.



Photo 6. Close-up fluffy flowerhead of giant sensitive plant, *Mimosa diplotricha*, showing long stamens.

### Summary

- Widespread. Africa, Asia, North, South and Central America, Caribbean, Europe, Oceania. In most Pacific islands.

- Important, invasive, weed of plantations, upland rice, food crop gardens, pastures, roadsides, waste sites. Fast growing, smothering other species, flowering early and producing much seed with long survival. Cattle avoid it.
- Stems, 4-sided with short, stiff, backward-pointing thorns. Leaves, alternate along stems, bright green, 10-20 cm long, divided into 4-9 pairs of leaf-like segments, each with 12-30 pairs of leaflets. Flowerheads, a cluster of pink to purple, individual flowers, with long stamens forming fluffy balls, on short prickly stalks. Seedpods, soft, spiny, in clusters, breaking into 2-4, 1-seeded parts.
- Spread: seeds by birds, other animals, clothing, in flowing water; use as a ground cover; moved in road materials; as pasture seed contaminant.
- Biosecurity: high risk of introduction. Among 10 worst weeds in Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands. In Australia, 'restricted invasive plant': do not release into environment, give away or sell.
- Biocontrol: *Heteropsylla spinulosa*, psyllid, introduced into Australia, PNG, Samoa. Fungus, *Corynespora cassiicola*, has potential.
- Cultural control: before flowering, hand weed (use gloves or hoe!) or slash; vehicle hygiene.
- Chemical control: in Australia: dicamba; diuron; fluroxypyr; glufosinate-ammonium. In Fiji, glyphosate. Apply to regrowth after slashing or burning.

## Common Name

Giant sensitive plant; it is also known as nila grass in Papua New Guinea. CABI prefers the name creeping sensitive plant. CABI calls *Mimosa pigra*, giant sensitive plant.

## Scientific Name

*Mimosa diplotricha*. It was known previously as *Mimosa invisa*. It is a member of the Fabaceae.

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The mobile application is available from the Google Play Store and Apple iTunes.

